# البرهان الجلي في التوثيقات أبي بلج يحيى بن أبي سليم الكوفي الواسطي

Clear proof about trustworthiness of Abu

Balj Yahya ibn Abi Sulaym al-Kufi al-Wasti

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# **Preface**

# بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

This article is to prove that Abu Balj was *Thiqa* (trustworthy) & his sole narrations are Hujjah.

This will be refutation of those who say his sole narrations are not reliable. We request our readers to read it till end and judge themselves.

أبو محمد حجاز الهندي

#### Bismillah wa Alhamdulillah Wassalaam Ala Rasoolillah

His Name and Area:

يحيى بن أبي سُليم أبو بلج الواسطي الفزاري.

His teachers:

روى عن محمد بن حاطب الجمحي وعمرو بن ميموث

Muhammad ibn Hatib al-Jumhi and Amr ibn Maimoon.

His students:

روى عنه سفيات وشعبة وزهير بن معاوية وأبو عوانة وهشيم وأبو حمزة السكري وسويد بن عبد العزيز

Sufyan al-Thawri, Shoba ibn al-Hajjaj, Zuhair ibn Muawiya, Abu Awana, Hushaim, Abu Hamza As-Sukri and Suwaid ibn Abd al-Aziz.

# Praise by Mohaddisin:

#### 1. Imam of ilal Yahya ibn Maeen:

نا عبد الرحمن قال ذكره أبي عن إسحاق بن منصور عن يحيى بن معين انه قال: ابوبلج ثقة.

Abdur-Rahman ibn Abi Hatim narrated from his father Abu Hatim ar-Razi from Ishaq ibn Mansoor from Yahya ibn Maeen end that Abu Balj was Thiqa (Trustworthy).

(الجرح والتعديل لإبن أبي حاتم 9/ 153)

#### 2. Imam of ilal Abu Hatim ar-Razi:

نا عبد الرحمن قال سألت أبي عن أبي بلج يحيى بن أبي سليم فقال: هو صالح لا بأس به. Abdurrahman ibn Abi Hatim narrated from his father Abu Hatim ar-Razi who said: Abu Balj Yahya ibn Abi Sulaym was Saleh (good) and there is no harm in him (Tadeel).

3. Imam of ilal ibn 'Adī:

There is nothing wrong in his Hadith.

4. Imam ibn Saad:

Abu Balj his name is Yahya ibn Abi Sulayn al-Fazari and he is Thiqa (Trustworthy) In Sha Allah.

(طبقات الكبرى لإبن سعد 7/ 226)

5. Imam of ilal al-Daragutni:

قلت يحيى بن أبي سليم أبو بلج. قال: واسطي، ثقة.

Imam Barqani (student of al-Darqutni) asked al-Darqutni about Yahya ibn Abi Sulaym Abu Balj. al-Darqutni replied: He is from Wasit and Thiqa (Trustworthy).

(سؤالات البرقاني للدارقطني رواية الكرجي عنه ص143 برقم 549 - الفاروق الحديثة للطباعة والنشر)

6. Imam Yaqub ibn Sufyan al-Fasawi:

وقال حدثنا سفيان عن أبي بلج كوفي لا بأس به

Imam Yaqoob ibn Sufyan (one of the main student of Imam Ahmed ibn Hanbal) says

that Sufyan al-Thawri narrated to me from Abu Balj and Abu Balj is Kufi no harm in him (Tadeel).

#### 7. Imam ibn 'Abd al-Barr:

Abu Umar ibn 'Abd al-Barr authenticated one chain of narration which includes Abu Balj Yahya ibn Sulaym by saying:

This sanad (chain) doesn't contain anyone who is objected. Because of their Sahih status and Because of their Trustworthiness in narrating things.

8. Imam Ahmed ibn Abi Bakr ibn Ismail famous with title al-Busiri :

6630 - وعن ابن عباس - رضى الله عنها- "أن رسول الله - صلى الله عليه وسلم - قال لعلي: أنت ولي كل مؤمن بعدي". رواه أبو داود الطيالسي بسند صحيح.

al-Busiri says This narration is narrated by Abu Dawood al-Tayalisi with Sahih chain.

So he authenticated the chain of this narration narrated by ibn Abbas.

(إتحاف الخيرة المهرة للحافظ أحمد بن أبي بكر بن إسهاعيل البوصيري 7/ 185)

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Abu Dawood al-Tayalisi narrated this Hadith of ibn Abbas with following chain which includes Abu Balj in it:

2875 – حدثنا يونس قال: حدثنا أبو داود قال: حدثنا أبو عوانة عن أبي بلج عن عمرو بن ميمون عن ابن عباس ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: لعلى أنت ولي كل مؤمن بعدي

(مسند أبي داود الطيالسي 4/ 469)

#### 9. Imam Diya al-Din al-Maqdisi:

He narrates a Hadith in his famous book al-Ahadith al-Mukhtara with chain which includes Abu Balj Yahya ibn Abi Sulaym.

Note: If he narrates something in this book and don't object the narration then the Hadees is sahih and narrators are reliable according to him as he writes in his opening of this book

And sometimes I will mention Hadith (in this book) with authentic chain with some default. So I will mention the default so that you may know it (i.e I will point out the chain in which there is default so that readers may know this chain has default in it.)

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So it's clear any narration he mentions and has defect he will point it out or else it has no default and sahih according to him. And this is very famous amongst the students of Hadith about this book of Diya al-Din al-Magdisi.

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He mentions various narrations from Abu Balj for eg -

36 - وَأُخْبِرِنَا أَبُو جَعْفَر الصيدلاني ان أَبَا عَلِيّ الْحداد أُخْبِرهُم وَهُوَ حَاضِر ابْنَا أَبُو نعيم ابْنَا عبد الله بن جَعْفَر ابْنَا يُونُس بن حبيب ثَنَا أَبُو دَاوُد الطَّيَالِسِيّ ثَنَا أَبُو عَوَانَة عَن أَبِي بلج عَن عَمْرو بن مَيْمُون عَن ابْن عَبَّاس أَن رَسُول الله صلى الله عَلَيْهِ وَسلم قَالَ لعَلى: "أَنْت ولي كل مُؤمن بعدِي".

And then finally he says:

أَبُو بلج: اسمه يحيى بن سليم وقيل: ابن أبي سليم الْفَزارِيّ الْكُوفِي. قَالَ: البُخَارِيّ: فِيهِ نظر. وَقَالَ ابن حَبَان:كَانَ يخطىء وقد وَثَقَهُ يحيى بن معين. وَقَالَ أَبُو حَاتِم الرَّازِيّ: لَا بَأْس بِهِ. وَيَكْفِي رِوَايَة شُعْبَة عَنهُ.

He mentions opinions of scholars on this narrator and then say مُنْنِي رَوَايَة شُعْبَة عَنهُ Which means and it's enough that Shoba ibn al-Hajjaj narrated from him .i.e after all the opinions of scholars on Abu Balj, it's enough that Shoba narrated from him.

(الأحاديث المختارة 13/ 30)

So, this narrator is trustworthy as per Diya al-Din al-Maqdisi.

10. Imam al-Hakim al-Nisaburi:

He says about a Hadith in Mustadrak:

هذا حديث صحيح الإسناد

This Hadith is with Sahih chain.

#### The chain includes Abu Balj

أخبرنا أبو بكر أحمد بن جعفر بن حمدان القطيعي ببغداد من أصل كتابه ثنا عبد الله بن أحمد بن حنبل حدثني أبي ثنا يحيى بن حماد ثنا أبو عوانة ثنا أبو بلج ثنا عمرو بن ميمون قال إني لجالس عند ابن عباس

(المستدرك 3/ 132 دار المعرفة)

So Abu Balj is trustworthy as per Imam Hakim.

#### 11. Imam Shams ad-Dīn adh-Dhahabī:

Adh-Dhahabi also authenticated this narration of al-Hakim in his footnotes on Mustadrak known as Talkhees.

He says : صحيح

Note: Both al-Hakim and adh-Dhahabi also authenticated other narration too which includes Abu Balj.

#### 12. Imam Yazid ibn Haroon:

وَقَالَ يَزِيدُ بْنُ هَارُونِ: قَدْ رَأَيْتُ أَبَا بَلْجٍ ، وَكَانَ جَارًا لَنَا ، وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ حَاجَةٌ فِي النِّسَاءِ، وَكَانَ يَذُكُرُ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا، فَقَالَ : النِّسَاءِ، وَكَانَ يَذُكُرُ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا، فَقَالَ : لَوْ قَامَتِ الْقِيَامَةُ لَدَخَلْنَا الْجَنَّةُ يَقُولُ : لِذِكْرِنَا اللَّه.

Imam ibn Saad narrates from his teacher Yazid ibn Haroon who said: I saw Abu Balj and he was our neighbor and he didn't have a need in women (sexual desire) and he made a bathroom in his house so that

he can take rest in it and be distracted from them (females) (so that he won't have a need to go outside for the bathroom and may get attracted to any female nearby) and he used to remember Allah alot and said if the judgement day arrives we would enter paradise and said and would have a remembrance of Allah.

(طبقات الكبرى لإبن سعد 7/ 226)

#### 13. lmam Shoba ibn Al-Hajjaj:

He is one of the famous student of Abu Balj and Shoba narrates Hadith from persons who are trustworthy as per him or else he do Jarh upon them.

Hafiz Diya al-Din al-Maqdisi says:

ويكفي رواية شعبة عنه

It's enough that Shoba narrated from him.

(الأحاديث المختارة 13/ 30)

This statement is clear proof that according to Diya al-Din al-Maqdisi Shoba narrates from persons who are trustworthy as per him.

Ibn 'Abd al-Barr says:

لا يأخذ إلا عن ثقة كمالك وشعبة

And Likes of Imam Malik and Shoba, they don't narrate except from Thiqa (Trustworthy).

(التمهيد لإبن عبد البر 1/ 17)

Hafiz al-Sakhawi says:

شعبة وكان متثبتا لا يكاد يروي إلا عن ثقة ، وكذا كان مالك

Shoba was a firm person he don't narrate except from Thiqa (Trustworthy) and similar was Imaam Malik.

(فتح المغيث 4/ 353)

Hafiz ibn Hajar says: (while discussing about one narration)

But surely Shoba narrated from him and Shoba don't take from his teachers accept that teacher is the one who is authentic in narrating Hadees.

Hafiz ibn Hajar also says in his book Tahzeeb al-Tahzeeb while mentioning the rules of this book: مثل أن يكون الرجل قد عرف من حاله أنه لا يروي إلا عن ثقة، فإنني أذكر جميع شيوخه أو أكثرهم، كشعبة ومالك

For example there may be a person about whom I surely know that they narrate only from Thiqa (trustworthy) so, I will mention their all teachers or most of them and he gives 2 example of such Scholars: Likes of Imam Malik and Shoba.

(ج ذيب التهذيب 1/ 5)

#### 14. Imam Nasai:

Note: We didn't got statement of Imam Nasai in his own book as his book is mafqood (lost ones). Someone can dispute on the authenticity that's why it's been written in the end. So Tauseeq (authenticity) of Abu Balj by Imaam Nasai is mentioned by scholars likes of Imam Mizzi in Tahzeeb al-Kamal and Hafiz Ibn al-Hajar in Tahzeeb al-Tahzeeb under details of Abu Balj Yayha bin abi Sulaym.

### Those who criticized him:

1 & 2 . Muhammad ibn Ismael al-Bukhari and as-Saadi Ibrahim ibn Yaqub Abu Ishaq al-Jawzjani

سمعتُ ابن حماد يقول: قال البُخارِيّ يَحْيى بن أبي سليم أبو بلج الفزاري سمع مُحَمد بن حاطب، وعَمْرو بن ميمون فيه نظر.

سمعتُ ابن حماد يقول: قال السعدي أبو بلج الواسطي غير ثقة.

Ibn 'Adī narrates from his teacher ibn Hammad Abu Bishr al-Dawlabi That Bukhari said there is something in him (Abu Balj Yaha bin Abi Sulaym) and as-Saadi said he is not trustworthy.

Both of these criticism are narrated by ibn 'Adi from his teacher ibn Hammad.

Let's see was ibn Hammad al-Dawlabi trustworthy himself?? The fact is he is considered as a liar while narrating things about narrators and he lied upon things he narrated against Nu'aym ibn Hammad.

So atleast he is not considered reliable in narrating things about some person.

Narrated by ibn al-Asakir in Tareekh al-Damishq with Sahih chain and also by ibn 'Adi in his own book.

أخبرنا أبو القاسم بن السمرقندي أنبأنا إسهاعيل بن مسعدة أنبأنا حمزة بن يوسف قال وقال ابن عدي وابن حماد متهم فيما يقول يعني في نعيم لصلابته في أهل الرأي.

Ibn 'Adi says: Ibn Hammad Abu Bishr al-Dawlabi al-Hanafi is a liar in things he narrated about Nu'aym ibn Hammad because he Nu'aym was strict against Ahl ar-Ra'y (people of opinions).

And note Abu Bishr al-Dawlabi was himself from Ahl ar-Ra'y (Hanafi).

So these criticism narrated by him are invalid plus none of the books of al-Bukhari have this criticism although his books are very much available likes of Tareekh al-Kabeer and Tareekh as-Sageer and Zuafa of Imam al-Bukhari. None of these books have such thing he said about Abu Balj Yahya ibn Abi Sulaym.

However, The statement of as-Saadi Ibrahim Yaqub Abu Ishaq al-Jawzjani is found in his own book. He says:

قال في احوال الرجال:

190- أبو بلج يعني يحيى بن أبي سليم الواسطي كان يروج الفواخت ليس بثقة

He says Abu Balj is not trustworthy.

#### Refutation-

al-Jawzjani was a person who used to hate Ali ibn Abi Talib and was Nasbi although he was a scholar in Hadith but was a Bidati in creed. He had hate towards people of Kufah and used to say things on them because he was Nasbi and people of Kufah loved Ali very much. scholars clearly said he was Nasbi and his sayings against Ahl Kufah are rejected. Abu Balj was a kufi narrator who used to narrate the merits of Ali ibn Abi Talib, the one as-Saadi al-Jawzjani used to hate. So, his objection on Abu Balj without any proof against more than 13 scholars is simply rejected.

Proof that al-Jawzjani was a Nasbi:

قال الحافظ في تهذيب التهذيب 1 / 182:

و قال ابن حبان فى " الثقات " : ابراهيم بن يعقوب بن اسحاق الجوزجاني... كان حريزي المذهب (أي على مذهب حريز بن عثمان الدمشقي المعروف بالنصب)، و لم يكن بداعية.

Ibn Hibban said he was Harizi (Nasbi) in Madhab and he didn't gave daw'ah for his creed.

#### Imam ibn 'Adi said:

قال الشيخ: السعدي هو إبراهيم بن يعقوب الجوزجاني كان مقيما بدمشق يحدث على المنبر ويكاتبه أحمد بن حنبل فيتقوى بكتابه ويقرؤه على المنبر وكان شديد الميل إلى مذهب أهل دمشق في التحامل على على رضي الله عنه

as-Saadi he is Ibrahim ibn Ya'qoob al-Jawzjani. He stayed in Damshiq and used to narrated on mi'mbar and he used to write from Ahmed ibn Hanbal and give fatwa on mi'mbar And he was very deep in Madhab of Ahle Damishq having hate towards Ali ibn Abi Talib.

Hafiz ibn Hajar rejected al-Jawzjani when he criticized one narator for being a Ghali shiya

سعيد بن عمرو بن أشوع الكوفي من الفقهاء وثقه ابن معين والنسائي والعجلي وإسحاق بن راهويه وأما أبو إسحاق الجوزجاني فقال كان زائغا غاليا يعنى في التشيع (قلت) والجوزجاني غال في النصب فتعارضا

Hafiz ibn Hajar said : I say al-Jawzjani was Ghaali Nasbi that's why he objected this narrator.

# Proof that al-Jawzjani is rejected when he says against Ahl Kufah:

#### Hafiz ibn Hajar says:

(وممن ينبغي) ان يتوقف في قبوله قوله في الجرح من كان بينه وبين من جرحه عداوة سببها الاختلاف في الاعتقاد فان الحاذق إذا تأمل ثلب أبى إسحاق الجوزجاني لأهل الكوفة رأى العجب وذلك لشدة انحرافه في النصب وشهرة أهلها بالتشيع فتراه لا يتوقف في جرح من ذكره منهم بلسان ذلقة وعبارة طلقة حتى أنه اخذ يلين مثل الأعمش وأبى نعيم وعبيد الله بن موسى وأساطين الحديث وأركان الرواية فهذا إذا عارضه مثله أو أكبر منه فوثق رجلا ضعفه قبل التوثيق.

Amongst those from whom We should hold ourselves from accepting criticism includes one who Criticize a Narrator because of his hate towards them and difference in creed.

If a master in science of Hadith would look at the criticism of Abu Ishaq al-Jawzjani about dwellers of Kufah then he will be shocked because of his Extreme deep creed of hating Ali and love of dwellers of Kufah (towards Ali). So you will see whoever he mentions from dwellers of Kufah he didn't stoped himself from criticizing them in a harsh way even to the likes of A'mash, Abu No'em, Ubaidullah ibn Musa who were the main pillars and base of Hadith. So if any Imam similar to al-Jawzjani or any other great Imam than him says any person to be Thiga (trustworthy) and al-Jawzjani criticize him for being non trustworthy then praise will be accepted for such narrator (al-Jawzjani will be rejected).

(لسان الميزان لابن حجر العسقلاني 1/ 212)

Hafiz ibn Hajar says:

وأما الجوزجاني فقد قلنا غير مرة: إن جرحه لا يقبل فى أهل الكوفة، لشدة انحرافه، ونصبه

With regards to al-Jawzjani I already said many times that his criticism is not accepted against dwellers of koofa because of his hate towards them and because of him being Nasbi (one who hate Ameerulmonineen Ali and people of Kufah that time used to love Ali and narrate in his praise many Hadith).

#### 3. Imam Abu Hatim ibn Hibban:

First things I want to clarify about ibn Hibban is that he was amongst the

mutashaddid (those who cross boundaries) Imams when it come to criticize someone in his book al-Majrooheen.

Scholars clearly mentioned how he criticize someone trustworthy person and without any solid proof.

For example -

1. Hafiz Shams ad-Dīn adh-Dhahabī mentions in his book Mizanul I'tidal

This narrator is considered authentic by scholars like Imam ibn Maeen and Abu Hatim ar-Razi

وقال أبو حاتم: صالح الحديث.

#### But ibn Hibban says about him:

وقال ابن حبان: يروي الموضوعات لا تحل الرواية عنه والاحتجاج به بحال.

This narrator use to narrate fabricated Hadith from trustworthy scholars so it's not halal to consider his narrations valid and to narrate Hadees from him.

Imam adh-Dhahabi says rejecting ibn Hibban :

قلت: ابن حبان ربما قصب الثقة حتى كأنه لا يدري ما يخرج من رأسه

I say (adh-Dhahabi) : Ibn Hibban sometimes criticize some trustworthy person

to the extent that he himself don't know what is coming out of his head.

2. adh-Dhahabi in his book Mizanul I'tidal volume 3 page 507 under the introduction of ibne Hibban writes:

And Imaam Abu Umar ibn as-Salah said in his book "Tabqat as-Shafia" About ibn Hibban: He did mistake huge serious mistakes in his works.

Then adh-Dhahabi says:

وصدق أبو عمرو، له أوهام كثيرة.

And Imaam Abu Umar ibn as-Salah said correctly. He (ibn Hibban) does many many mistakes.

Many examples can be given which clearly proves ibn Hibban does criticize someone without solid proof and goes against the majority and bigger scholars then him and is rejected by other scholars for such behaviour of his.

He himself said about one narator that it's compulsory to remove him from kitab al-Majrooheen:

سفيان بن حسين بن حسن السلمي من أهل واسط يروى عن عطاء وطاوس والزهري وأما روايته عن الزهري فان فيها تخاليط يجب أن يجانب وهو ثقة في غير حديث الزهري مات في ولاية هارون يجب أن يمحى اسمه من كتاب المجروحين.

Sufyan ibn Husayn ibn Hasan As-Sulami from dwellers of Wasit (area) he narrated from Ata, Ta'us, Zuhri. For his narrations from Zuhri he does mistakes in it so it's compulsory to not consider it And he is trustworthy in Hadith other than those he narrated from Zuhri. He died during the ruling of Harun. It's compulsory for me to remove his name from My book al-Majrooheen.

(الثقات لابن حبان 6/ 404)

So you can clearly see ibn Hibban does many mistakes in his book al-Majrooheen and is criticized by scholars for doing such Talks upon narrators.

Now coming to Abu Balj. He is being Praised by total 13 (14 if we count Nasai) scholars of Hadith many of them are much more bigger and masters in this science than ibn Hibban. How can we even consider his Jarh upon such narrator. And we will show ibn Hibban was not sure while criticizing Abu Balj but in fact he was confused himself.

Let's see what he actually wrote about Abu Balj:

يحيى بن أبي سليم أَبُو بلج الْفَزارِيِّ من أهل الْكُوفَة وَقَدْ قيل إِنَّه واسطي يروي عَن مُحَمَّد بن حَاطِب وَعَمْرو بن مَيْمُون روى عَنهُ شُعْبَة وهشيم كَانَ مِمَّن يُخطئ لم يفحش خَطؤهُ حَتَّى اسْتحق التَّرْك وَلَا أَتَى مِنْهُ مَا لَا يَنْفَكَ الْبشر عَنهُ فيسلك بِهِ مَسْلَك الْعُدُول فَأْرِي أَن لَا يُحْتَج بِمَا انْفَرد من الرِّوَايَة وَهُوَ مِمَّن أَستخير الله فِيهِ

Yahya ibn Abj Sulaym Abbu Balj al-Fazari, from the dwellers of Kufah, it was said: "He

was Wasiti" Narrates from Muhammad bin Hatib and `Amr ibn Maymoun, those who narrated from him are Shoba and Hushaym. He is from those who make mistakes (in Hadith), but his mistakes were not so extreme that he deserved to be abandoned, nor is it unnatural for humans to make such errors, thus we take the middle path when it comes to him, so I see that we must not accept what he exclusively narrates on his own. And he is one for whom I do istekhara to Allah .(A prayer when you are not sure what to do and pray to Allah to make your heart firm on what is best for you).

(المجروحين لابن حبان 3/ 113)

#### Refutation:

Ibn Hibban clearly says there is no such mistakes from him that are big ones and

it's not correct to do tark of this narrator Then he says his single narrations will not be considered as proof???

How can a person who don't do any big mistakes and authenticated by big scholars and his single narration is not authentic??

He himself is not sure about his decision so he does istekhara to ask Allah what will be his best decision??

It's crystal clear that he was not sure what to actually believe about this narrator and he says not to consider his single narrations.

This is clear proof of he being strict for no reason and scholars criticized him for the same reason.

## Conclusion:

- 1. ABU BALJ YAHYA Ibn ABI SULAYM IS TRUSTWORTHY NARRATOR AND 13 SCHOLARS PRAISED HIM FOR THAT.
- 2. ONLY TWO PERSONS CRITICISM IS AVAILABLE WITH AUTHENTIC SOURCE.
- a) AL-JAWZJANI WHO IS REJECTED
  WHILE CRITICIZING PEOPLE OF AHLE
  KOOFA AND HE WAS NASBI WHO USED
  TO HATE AMEERULMONINEEN ALI IBN

ABI TALIB. SO HIS SAYING THAT TO WITHOUT CLEAR PROOFS AGAINST A NARRATOR WHO NARRATES MERITS OF AMEERULMONINEEN ALI IS SIMPLY REJECTED.

b) IBN HIBBAN IS CRITICIZED FOR CRITICIZING NARRATORS WITHOUT PROPER PROOFS AND FOR HIS STRICT BEHAVIOUR AND HE WAS INFACT CONFUSED HIMSELF WHILE CRITICIZING ABU BALJ YAHYA BIN ABI SULAYM.

So we conclude this Narrator is Trustworthy and authentic and there is nothing wrong in taking him as evidence Hujjah.

